



## ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

*Dr. Tom W. Kimbrell, Commissioner*

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### **Number of students taking AP exams, overall scores increase**

**LITTLE ROCK** – The number of students taking Advanced Placement tests, as well as the state's overall scores, increased in 2013.

The number of AP exams scoring 3 or higher out of a possible 5 increased 8.6 percent, as compared to the nation's increase of 6.1 percent. A score of 3 or higher on the exam is generally accepted for college credit at colleges around the country.

Information released today by College Board, the nonprofit entity that provides SAT and AP assessments, also shows that the number of students who took AP exams increased 6.6 percent, as compared to 5.7 percent for the nation.

"Arkansas has taken great strides to improve not only the number of students taking AP assessments, but the overall scores as well," Department of Education Commissioner Dr. Tom Kimbrell said.

In addition to providing additional training for teachers and an increase in the number of pre-AP classes offered on the junior-high level, the increase can be attributed to Act 2152 of 2005, which made Arkansas the only state in the country that pays for AP exams.

Every high school in the state offers a minimum of four AP classes in the core areas of English, social studies, math and science to high school students. Students who take these college-level classes have the opportunity to qualify for college credit based on their scores on the AP exams, which are given in May each year. The most popular AP exams in Arkansas in 2013 were English language, English literature, U.S. history, world history and AB calculus.

Research has shown that taking an AP class increases a student's GPA in college and the likelihood of graduating even if the student does not make a qualifying score on the exam. When students do make qualifying scores of 3 or higher, their predicted GPAs and graduation rates increase as well. Being exposed to the rigor of college classes early improves student achievement in college.

In addition to the increase in AP exam scores, College Board announced that the mean (or average) SAT scores in critical reading, mathematics and writing increased slightly from 2012. Although most colleges and universities accept both ACT and SAT assessments, a majority of students in Arkansas take the ACT. In 2013, 897 students took the SAT.

For more information about these scores, go to <http://apreport.collegeboard.org/goals-and-findings>.



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